

CalPERS

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Open Enrollment News

September 1997

What's in Your Health Benefits Information Package?



1 CalPERS Health Program News

This newsletter gives you the highlights of changes and what's new for the upcoming year. Be sure to read this material **before** making your decision on whether or not to change plans.

2 CalPERS Health Plan Decision Guide

The name says it all! This booklet is intended to guide you through the process of choosing a health plan during the Open Enrollment Period or to help those who are just becoming CalPERS members to choose a plan.

3 CalPERS Health Program Handbook

Finally, one handy source for important information on the **policies, procedures, and requirements** of the CalPERS Health Program. Since changes in your personal life or your career can take place at any time, it's a good idea to file this Handbook with your other important papers.

4 Understanding Medicare & Your CalPERS Health Benefits

Special rules apply when you, or your family members, become eligible for Medicare. This booklet provides valuable information on Medicare, integration with CalPERS health plans, and descriptions of the options available to you.

What's New for 1998?

Before you decide whether or not to change plans...

Even if you are happy with your present plan, you should review the information that follows.

It could impact your decision of whether a health plan change is right for you.

If you decide to stay with your present plan, you don't have to do a thing.

You will automatically remain in your plan.

**Before
You
Start!**

You Talked...

We hope you find
all the information
in your package
helpful, and the
new formats easy-
to-use. Be sure to
give us your
feedback by
completing the
survey in the
*CalPERS Health Plan
Decision Guide*. If
you need help along
the way, be sure to
give us a call.

Dear CalPERS Health Program Member,

I am most pleased to present the new information materials for your use during the 1997 Open Enrollment Period. This year, we have a new look and have expanded the information you can use to make the extremely important decision of who will provide health care to you and your family.

The CalPERS Board is committed to providing you quality health care at an affordable price. In partnership with our health plans, we continue to make important improvements in the delivery of the care you receive. You can be proud to be a part of the second largest purchaser of employee health benefits in the nation.

Many of you have been a part of the surveys we've sent out asking about your experiences with your health plan. You talked ... we listened. This year we're pleased to announce the addition of a new hearing aid benefit, adding more to your "benefit dollar". Our health

plans have committed to working towards fewer disruptions within their physician networks, and we've begun a pilot program to look at limits in specialist referrals and improved access to this type of care. We will continue to develop innovations to ensure the best care possible for you and your family at the best price for your personal budget.

So, please take your time in reviewing the materials and choose your plan carefully. And be sure to complete and return the survey in the new ***CalPERS Health Plan Decision Guide***. We need your views for continued improvement.

Your Partner In Health,



William D. Crist, President
CalPERS Board of Administration

... We Listened.

New for 1998...



New Benefits

Effective January 1, 1998, HMO Basic and Supplement to Medicare, PERSCare Basic, and PERS Choice Basic and Supplement to Medicare plans will be adding coverage for hearing tests and hearing aids. HMO Managed Medicare plans added this benefit in January 1997. You can find out more on benefits by reviewing the Benefit Summaries located in the center of the **CalPERS Health Plan Decision Guide**. Be sure to use the chart that applies to you.

Plan Mergers

Several health plans have experienced mergers and are no longer available as separate plans in our program. **Kaiser North** and **Kaiser South** have consolidated their operations creating one plan. Members in either plan will automatically remain with Kaiser, unless choosing otherwise. **Foundation Health** and **Health Net** have announced their plans to merge. Members enrolled in Foundation Health will be automatically enrolled in Health Net, unless they choose otherwise. **PacifiCare** has acquired **FHP**. FHP members will be automatically enrolled in PacifiCare, unless they choose otherwise.

If you are a member of one of these plans and do not wish to continue in the new plan, you must change health plans during this Open Enrollment Period.

New Rates

Some of you will notice a slight increase in your monthly premium rates. The average increase for our HMOs was 2.8 percent. However, each HMO is different. Be sure to check the monthly premium amount of your current plan, and any plans you are considering, on page 14 & 15 of the **CalPERS Health Plan Decision Guide** enclosed in this package.

While CalPERS members have enjoyed four straight years of premium reductions, recent cost increases in the industry have impacted CalPERS also. Prescription drugs alone have seen an average 13 percent increase. Your costs are significantly lower than those anticipated nationally, where rate increases of up to 10 percent have been projected.



Open Enrollment Period

**September 1 -
October 15, 1997**

Open Enrollment is the time when you can change plans or add eligible family members not currently enrolled in the program. Changes made during this time will be effective January 1, 1998. The enclosed *CalPERS Health Program Handbook* can assist you in determining when you and your family members are eligible. The *CalPERS Health Plan Decision Guide* has all the information you need to find the right plan for you.

Employer Contributions

In figuring your monthly cost of health care, remember to take into account the amount of contribution your employer pays. The CalPERS Health Program includes employees from State, public agencies, and school districts. Employer contributions vary by employer.

State & California State University System Employees

Active: The employer contribution amounts could change for you, depending on the outcome of the collective bargaining process between each unit and the Department of Personnel Administration or the CSU System. As of June 1997, the employer contribution is at the amount set in 1995. Your Personnel

Office can provide you with the latest information for use in determining the monthly cost to you for each plan.

Retired: The State's employer contribution toward your monthly premium will be increasing for 1998. **The new amounts will be: one party – \$170; two party – \$314; and family – \$384.** To determine the cost to you, subtract the employer contribution amount from the plan's monthly premium. If the premium is higher than the contribution, the difference is the monthly cost to you.

Public Agency Employees & Retirees (Cities, Counties, School Districts, Etc.)

Employer contributions vary from one agency to another. Contact your employer, or former employer if you are retired, to determine the amount of contribution they provide.

How To Use Your Health Information Package

To Get Started...

1 Review this newsletter to decide if a health plan change is right for you. (More detail can be found in the other booklets.)

Use the *Health Plan Choice Worksheet* on the last page of this newsletter to keep track of plan information as you review the **CalPERS Health Plan Decision Guide**.

2 First, pull out the Benefit Summary charts from the center of the **Guide**. Be sure to use the chart for the plan type that you are eligible for.

Review the information on plan benefits, rates, service areas, quality, satisfaction, and other general facts.

Retirees should use the form located in the back of the booklet to change plans or add family members. Active members need to use a form available through your Personnel Office.

IF YOU DO **NOT** WANT TO CHANGE PLANS OR COVERAGE FOR FAMILY MEMBERS, YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO A THING.

3 Review the **CalPERS Health Program Handbook**. Keep this information with your other important papers. It contains the rules and regulations of the CalPERS Health Program.

4 If you are eligible for Medicare — or if you are not sure — be sure to read the **Understanding Medicare & Your CalPERS Health Benefits** booklet carefully. Not following all the rules can **COST** you money.

How To Reach CalPERS

You can call the CalPERS Health Benefit Services Division (HBSD) toll-free at **(800)237-3345**. Representatives are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or you can leave a message 24-hours a day, seven days a week, and we will call you back within 48 hours.

CalPERS Health Benefits Program Information

- **Active State Employees**
Contact Your Personnel Health Benefits Officer
- **Retired State Employees**
HBSD Telephone Information Center
(800)237-3345
Local Calls (916)326-3970
TDD (916)326-3240
FAX (916)326-3935
- **Active Public Agency Employees**
Contact Your Personnel Health Benefits Officer
- **Retired Public Agency Employees**
HBSD Telephone Information Center
(800)237-3345
Local Calls (916)326-3604
TDD (916)326-3240
FAX (916)558-4106



PUT *Yourself*

IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT



with



PERS Choice

&



With a full menu of benefits, low copayments, a 24-hour NurseLine, and the freedom to choose from a network of more than 47,000 physicians (or for a few dollars more, a physician outside the network), there's no better time to become a PERSCare or PERS Choice member.

Both the Basic & Supplement to Medicare plans offer security, freedom of choice, and comprehensive health care coverage for you and your family.

And each plan allows you to see a specialist without a referral.

To find out more, call (800) 882-PERS. We can provide the road map to quality health care.

Decisions! Decisions!

The **CalPERS Health Plan Decision Guide** has information on the factors you should consider when choosing a health plan -- cost, benefits, quality, performance, satisfaction, administration, and more. As you go through the booklet, use this **Health Plan Choice Worksheet** to help you compare information among plans.

Fill in the names of the plans available where you live that you are considering. Go through the factors listed in the left column. Some answers will be a simple yes or no, while others will require you to insert information. Remember, **the best plan for you will be the one that works for your specific situation** — the Worksheet serves only as a comparison tool.

Health Plan Choice Worksheet

Plan Names			
What type of health plan is it? Basic, Supplement to Medicare, or Managed Medicare			
How are benefits provided? HMO, PPO, or Association			
How does the plan meet the quality measures? Childhood Immunizations			
Cholesterol Screening			
Prenatal Care			
Cervical Cancer Screening			
Breast Cancer Screening			
Diabetic Eye Exams			
How did the plan rate in member satisfaction? Physician Satisfaction			
Plan Satisfaction			
Referral to Specialists			
Choice of Specialists			
Member Recommendation			
Are all family members required to use the same Primary Care Physician?			
Are specialist referrals limited to the same medical group or association?			
What is the monthly premium?			
What is my employer/former employer contribution?			
Does my current physician contract with the plan?			
Other Info:			
My health plan choice:			



California
Public Employees'
Retirement System

400 P Street
Sacramento, CA
95814

Health Benefit
Services Division
(800) 237-3345

www.calpers.ca.gov